COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

DEFENDER

Issue 8 • Winter 2016

GARTH ENNIS: ALMOST EVERYTHING IS CONTROVERSIAL THESE DAYS

TRUMP & THE FIRST AMENDMENT

2016: THE YEAR IN CENSORSHIP

STEVE DILLON 2016

Director's Note

One step forward, two steps back. That phrase encapsulated the prevailing mood of many following the election of Donald Trump. His campaign statements against free press, peaceful protest, and the exercise of religion represent a slur upon the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment that is unprecedented in American presidential politics. As I write this during Thanksgiving week, the President-Elect is moderating his views in some areas, so there's cause to be open-minded about how his Justice Department will view the First Amendment. But vigilance is required. On page 3, we take a first look at "Free Expression in Trump's America," and some local incidents that we hope are outliers but acknowledge may be representative of threats to come.

While we're uncertain about how the new administration will behave, we can take some comfort in the vast steps forward comics and free expression have taken in 2016. On page 5, we're proud to report a victory in a suit we brought against an unconstitutional Internet law in Louisiana that would have had negative consequences for retailers and artists. On that same page, we proudly congratulate Congressman John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell on winning the National Book Award for *March Book Three*, and a new documentary on Mike Diana achieving the funding to ensure its release. These projects are boosting the profile of comics in popular culture, and we vigorously applaud them. We also look back at the many, many achievements, legal and educational, that CBLDF achieved in 2016 thanks to your support on pages 9–11.

These victories are welcome, but they come in a climate filled with many challenges to fight. On page 5, we link to an important advisory we created for California retailers, unpacking what a new, seemingly overbroad, law governing the sale of autographs means for them. Page 4 spotlights recent attacks on comics and books, including a challenge to the graphic novel *Mangaman* in the Seattle area. On page 12–13, we survey recent "International Incidents" of creators, editors and administrators facing intimidation, jail, and in one horrible case, murder, for exercising free speech. These are the kinds of incidents that make the First Amendment such a valuable freedom—they don't happen here. But this is why we fight, to ensure those rights never erode.

We close the year by chatting with one of our favorite supporters, Garth Ennis, who shares his sharp observations about politics and censorship along with comments about his favorite stories to write on pages 6–7. Finally, we say goodbye to Steve Dillon, who provided this issue's cover. Steve was a big-hearted man whose kindness and devotion to CBLDF will be eternally appreciated.

CBLDF's work is more relevant than ever. We hope we can count on your support as we prepare for a busy 2017.

—Charles Brownstein, Executive Director

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James Wood Bailey, Grant Geissman, and Philip Harvey

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FREE EXPRESSION IN TRUMP'S AMERICA

The election of Donald Trump sent shockwaves across all segments of American life, including the First Amendment community. Trump's record of remarks hostile to the rights the First Amendment guarantees requires organizations invested in free speech to increase their vigilance. While it's too early to know how the First Amendment will fare on the national level under Trump's Justice Department, local incidents are beginning to emerge that are informed by the President-Elect's campaign rhetoric that may be outliers, or may be signifiers of challenges to come.

BOOKSTORE THREATENED

In October, a bookstore in Saugerties, New York, was threatened with misdemeanor zoning violation charges over an anti-Trump window display. The display featured books about Hitler and Trump and a banner bearing a swastika and the phrase "Trump: Make America Hate Again." Inquiring Minds Bookstore owner Brian Donoghue assembled the display to voice his concerns over statements made by Trump during his campaign. Store staff supported the display according to Donoghue.

The city sent two zoning violation citations to the store, demanding the removal of the display by November 1 or Donoghue would face misdemeanor charges. Lawyers for the Media Coalition, of which CBLDF is a member, informed city officials that their order to remove the display was in violation of Donoghue's First Amendment right to free expression. In response, city officials refused to admit any wrongdoing and agreed to remove the notices if Donoghue took down the display after the election — something Donoghue intended to do regardless.

Demonstrations of prosecutorial fiat to stifle political speech or unpopular business personalities is nothing new to CBLDF. In 2004, U.S. Customs in the port of South Carolina seized a shipment of comics bound for Top Shelf Productions, claiming that Peter Kuper's story "Richie Bush," a Richie Rich parody satirizing the Bush administration in the anthology *Stripburger*, violated piracy laws. From 2004 through 2007, prosecutors in Rome, Georgia, waged a vendetta against comic store owner Gordon Lee, whose combative relationship with city leaders appeared to be a motivating factor in the ferocity of the prosecution. CBLDF intervened and prevailed in both cases.

"At least our country is unified about being divided."

CHALLENGING ISLAM

Michelle Edmisten, the mother of a seventh grader in Sullivan County, Tennessee filed a formal challenge to an entire world history textbook because she believes that some parts of the unit on religions amount to "Islamic indoctrination."

The first time she spoke during the school board's public comment period, Edmisten said that her daughter had refused to complete a test that included basic questions about Islam, including the name of the religion's holy book and listing the Five Pillars. Her daughter received a grade of zero on the test, but Edmisten felt that she should have been offered an alternate assignment instead.

The school district has a policy on "Religion in the Curriculum," which says that "no religious belief or non-belief shall be promoted, and none shall be belittled" in Sullivan County classrooms. The current statewide curriculum standards for Tennessee require that seventh-grade students learn about the basics of all major world religions including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Under new standards that were already being considered before Edmisten launched her challenge, however, the Islamic history component would be eliminated. State Board of Education Vice President Susan Lodal allowed that the world's second-largest religion is "still part of history [but] we're just not teaching it to our children."

Edmisten submitted a formal challenge to the textbook on November 4, and the case is under review. CBLDF joined the Kids' Right to Read Project on a November 17 letter reminding the school district of their First Amendment obligation to teach the material.

In recent years, CBLDF has fought numerous battles in defense of Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, in part due to its depiction of Iran during the Islamic Revolution. It is similarly alarming that Edmisten and some members of her community are unable to distinguish that learning key facts about Islam is very different from being "indoctrinated" to it, and is in fact necessary for any informed citizen to understand the world today. The anti-Islamic sentiment rooted in challenges of this nature suggest an alarming trend towards stifling protected religious speech in American communities.

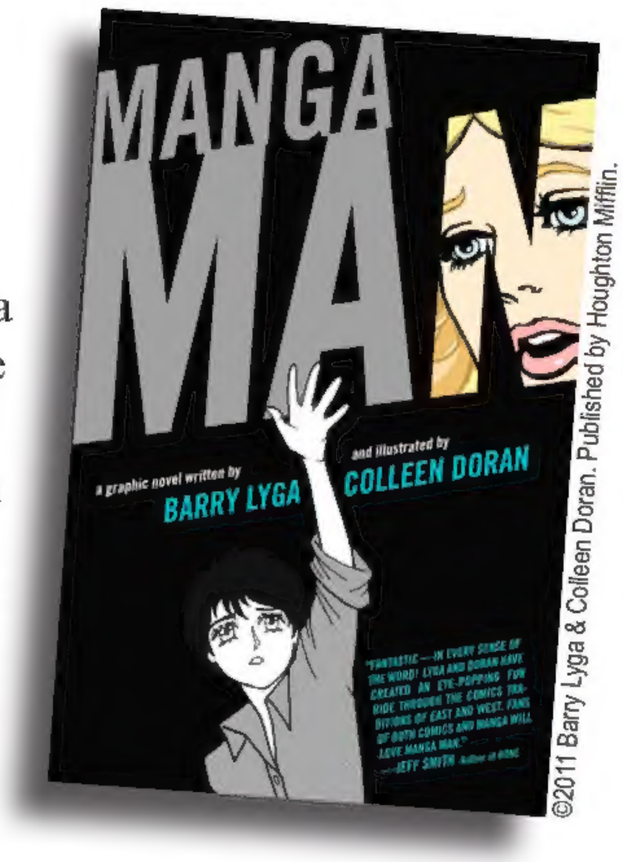
"We monitor these trends not to be alarmist, but to be prepared," says CBLDF Executive Director Charles Brownstein. "The vast majority of our battles happen in local venues. We will do everything in our power to protect our community's First Amendment rights in this climate."

Parent Objects to Pixelated Genitals in *Mangaman*

After coming across one instance of pixelated genitals in the YA graphic novel *Mangaman*, a mother in Issaquah, Washington, plans to formally request that the book be removed and/or restricted in the library at her 14-year-old son's high school. Parent Shirley Lopez has in the meantime aired her grievance with a local news station, attacking the school for making the book available.

Mangaman, written by Barry Lyga and illustrated by Colleen Doran, tells the story of Ryoko, a manga character who falls through a dimensional rift into a real-world American high school. The book received starred reviews from *Kirkus* and *School Library Journal*, as well as praise from *Bone* creator Jeff Smith. All available reviews judge it to be appropriate for high-school-aged readers.

In the clever metanarrative of *Mangaman*, Ryoko has trouble fitting in at his new school because he involuntarily brought with him various manga conventions: heart eyes when he develops a crush on the beautiful Marissa Montaigne, speed lines when he moves fast, and perhaps most embarrassing of all, pixelated genitals. On the page that Lopez flagged as objectionable, the nude Ryoko sheepishly cites Article 175 of Japan's Criminal Code to assure Marissa that "it's there, you just can't see it." In the next few panels both Ryoko and Marissa admit with relief that they are not yet ready to have sex.


MANGA MAN
a graphic novel written by
BARRY LYGA
and illustrated by
COLLEEN DORAN
"FANTASTIC — IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD! LYGA AND DORAN HAVE CREATED AN EYE-POPPING TOUR RIDE THROUGH THE COMICS TRADITIONS OF EAST AND WEST. FANS OF BOTH COMICS AND MANGA WILL LOVE MANGA MAN."
—JEFF SMITH
©2011 Barry Lyga & Colleen Doran. Published by Houghton Mifflin.

Lopez told local news station KIRO that she considers *Mangaman* to be "erotica," but it actually speaks to teen manga fans with sly visual tropes they already understand about an awkward situation many of them probably recognize.

Nevertheless, Lopez insists she does not "want my kid to be feeding his mind with that." She has already spoken to Issaquah High School's librarian and principal, both of whom judged the book appropriate to remain on library shelves. They did offer to bar Lopez's son from checking it out, but she was apparently unsatisfied with that solution. The next step would be for Lopez to fill out and submit a challenge form, and she said she intends to do that.

If and when Lopez does file a formal challenge to *Mangaman*, the book will be assessed by the standing Instructional Materials Committee. They will issue a recommendation within two weeks, and if Lopez is not satisfied with the decision she can appeal it to the school board which would have the final say. In the meantime, district policy says the book is to remain available in the library.

CENSORSHIP SCORECARD

CBLDF joins coalition efforts to protect the freedom to read comics. Taking an active stand against all instances of censorship curbs precedent that could adversely affect the rights upon which comics readers depend. Here are a few of our latest cases...

Virginia

DEVELOPING: Just a few months after Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe vetoed a bill that would have required public schools to notify parents of "sexually explicit content" in curricular materials, the proposal has returned in the form of a new draft regulation from the state Department of Education. CBLDF and our partners in the Kids' Right to Read Project sent a letter calling attention to this end-run and urging members of the Virginia Board of Education to reject the proposal. The labeling proposal could restrict the use of a host of classics, from *Romeo and Juliet* to *Brave New World*.

Falls Church City School District, Virginia

DEVELOPING: CBLDF joined the National Coalition Against Censorship on a letter to the school board asking them to repeal a policy that allows principals to review school newspaper content prior to publication. Ostensibly put into place to prevent students from publishing libelous or obscene content, the policy has been abused by school administrators to censor student reporting.

Sullivan County, Tennessee

DEVELOPING: In response to a parent who wants a world history textbook removed from the district's seventh-grade curriculum due to what she calls "Islamic indoctrination" in a unit on world religions, CBLDF and its partners in KRRP sent a letter to the superintendent and school board members, outlining the First Amendment issues at stake. Michelle Edmisten said that her daughter had refused to complete a test that included basic questions about Islam, including the name of the religion's holy book and a listing of the Five Pillars. Her daughter received a grade of zero on the test, but Edmisten felt that she should have been offered an alternate assignment instead.

Nassau County, Florida

DEVELOPING: After two parents launched a media crusade against a popular series of books by YA author Lauren Myracle, CBLDF and other partners in KRRP sent a letter to administrators at Yulee Middle School, urging them to leave the books on library shelves. Parents Brook Todd and Billie Thrift expressed concerns over explicit language and age inappropriate content. They took their concerns to school officials only after they had contacted local news outlets. The district convened a review committee made up of teachers, librarians, and administrators who will decide the merit of the challenge.

March Book Three Wins National Book Award

Congressman John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell took home the National Book Award in young people's literature for *March Book Three*, the first time that a graphic novel has been awarded the honor.

March Book Three is the concluding volume of Congressman Lewis's first-hand account of the Civil Rights Movement and his experience as the chair of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Scripted by Aydin and drawn by Powell, the series is a powerful account of Lewis's nonviolent fight against racism in the deep South.

NPR reported that Lewis's acceptance of the award was one of the most emotional moments of the night. "I had a wonderful teacher in elementary school who told me, 'Read my child, read!' And I tried to read everything," Lewis tearfully recalled. "To come here and receive this award—it's too much."

Congressman John Lewis (c), Andrew Aydin (l), and Nate Powell (r) after their National Book Award win. (Photo courtesy Leigh Walton, Top Shelf Productions.)

Mike Diana Documentary Funds, Clears Arrest Warrant

Over two decades after *Boiled Angel* creator Mike Diana became the first and only U.S. artist ever convicted of obscenity, an upcoming documentary aims to tell his story.

The Trial of Mike Diana will explore the often subjective standards of obscenity and how they led to Diana's conviction. Despite CBLDF's best efforts, which went all the way to the Supreme Court, Diana was convicted of obscenity and received a fine of $3,000, as well as a sentence of three years' probation that included stipulations that he stay away from minors and refrain from drawing.

The filmmakers turned to Kickstarter to help fund the project. They raised $5,000 over their goal, using the extra funds to pay an outstanding fine related to Diana's conviction. The film will include original animation by Diana and interviews with several key players from the trial, as well as commentary from a slate of industry experts including Neil Gaiman, who was inspired to join CBLDF's board of directors after witnessing this miscarriage of justice.

Find out more about these stories and get the latest news every day at www.cbldf.org!

VICTORY IN LOUISIANA: ONLINE AGE-VERIFICATION LAW STRUCK DOWN

CBLDF is among a group of plaintiffs who secured a permanent injunction against an unconstitutional Louisiana law that posed a significant threat to retailers and artists publishing on the Internet.

On October 7, Chief Judge Brian A. Jackson of federal district court signed an order permanently preventing Louisiana from enforcing H.B. 153. Judge Jackson had previously granted a preliminary injunction in the case, *Garden District Book Shop v. Stewart*. The state then determined that it would not defend the constitutionality of the law and agreed to the permanent injunction.

Had the law not been struck down, booksellers and publishers would have had to either place an age confirmation button in front of their entire websites, thereby restricting access to materials that may be appropriate for all ages, or attempt to review all of the publications available at their websites and place an age confirmation button in front of each individual page that might be inappropriate for any minor. Failure to age-verify, even if no minor ever tried to access the material, would have been a crime subject to a $10,000 fine. False attestation by minors would have also been a crime under this law.

"We're elated to have been a part of crushing this unconstitutional law," said CBLDF Executive Director Charles Brownstein. "The provisions would have had a profound chilling effect on creators and retailers in Louisiana and harkened back to the generation of unconstitutional Internet laws we helped defeat in the early part of this century."

The plaintiffs in the case are two independent booksellers, Garden District Book Shop and Octavia Books; Future Crawfish Paper LLC, publisher of Anti-Gravity magazine; the American Booksellers Association; and CBLDF. The lawsuit was brought by the Media Coalition and the American Civil Liberties Union.

CBLDF ISSUES ADVISORY ON CALIFORNIA AUTOGRAPH LAW

California recently passed Assembly Bill No. 1570, a law that governs the sale of autographed items. CBLDF reached out to the lawmakers and our legal experts to produce an advisory about how the new law could affect the comics industry in California. To view the advisory in full, please visit http://tinyurl.com/z9wh8y6

Detail from the cover of *The Boys* volume 1.
Artwork by series co-creator Darick Robertson.
(Published by Dynamite Entertainment. Used with permission.)

NOTHING SACRED

GARTH ENNIS ON GENRE & CENSORSHIP

Garth Ennis has a long history of boundary-pushing work in comics. He's never been one to stifle his creative output, producing some of the most entertaining and subversively complex work in the medium. He's the co-creator of the acclaimed and enduring *Preacher* series, and known for his groundbreaking run on *Punisher*, his irreverent look at superheroes in *Hitman* and *The Boys*, and his detailed exploration of war in the *Battlefields* series. Earlier this year, Ennis took a moment to talk to CBLDF about genre comics, controversy, and censorship.

You've written comics in several genres—sci-fi, horror, war, superhero. Which genre do you like best and why?

War, by far. Because of its basis in reality—which, I think, has a power that renders fantasy almost irrelevant. There's more drama than in any other genre to begin with, but knowing that the stories are based on things that actually happened, which people actually did and that had an actual effect on our world, is something I find endlessly fascinating.

What are some ways in which some of your characters would respond to the current political climate around the world?

Tommy Monaghan would have another beer. Jesse Custer would curse losing the Word of God at the end of his story. Kev Hawkins would pat his tiger and hope none of it would impact on him in any way whatsoever. Rover, Red, and Charlie would claim to be dogs. Billy Butcher would laugh quietly to himself as he watched the international cauldron bubble—and start planning.

Interview by Betsy Gomez

Much of the work you write focuses on warfare during World War II. If you were to write a comic book about contemporary warfare, in what ways would it differ from books set during earlier wars?

Probably in technological terms as much as anything else. And, of course, there'd be a lot more low-intensity warfare, featuring terrorism and counterinsurgency rather than the huge battlefield confrontations of the past.

Based on your body of work, you have no problem writing a story that courts controversy. That said, have there been any situations in which your work was censored or you felt the need to self-censor? How did you respond?

Almost everything is controversial these days; the word is flung around willy-nilly to the point that it's almost lost all meaning. Personally, whenever I hear it mentioned I prepare myself for a nice, relaxing snooze. My own attitude is that I write each story the way that feels appropriate to me and let the chips fall where they may.

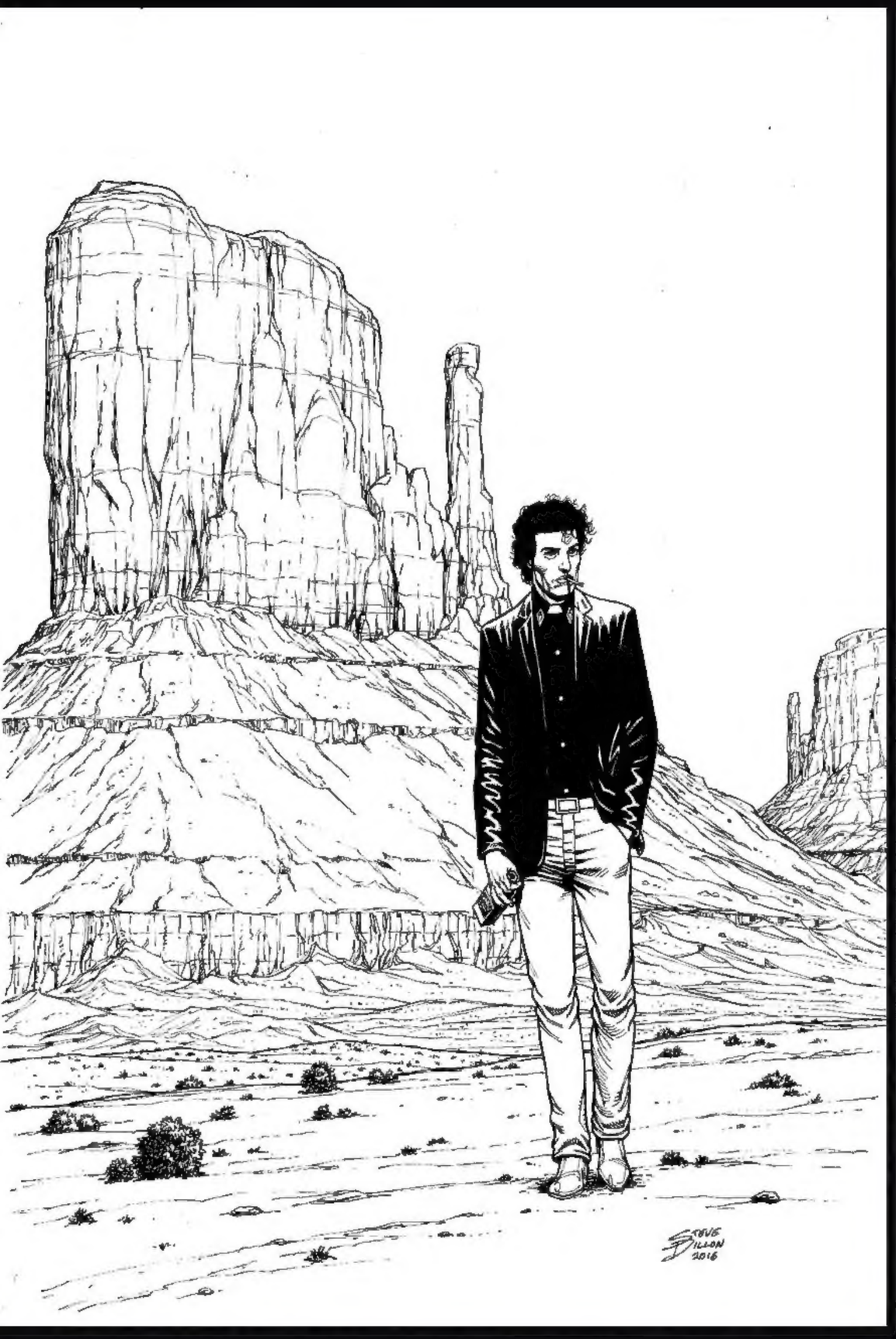
Since I began working for independent comics about ten years ago I've never had to worry about censorship, and even on my recent work for DC and Marvel I've been surprised at how much has gotten through. What doesn't is usually for reasons more bizarre or even amusing than anything else—for instance, in *Section Eight* #1 there was a panel in which a tormented Batman claims not to be a racist, accompanied by art from the old *Death in the Family* storyline. Originally, John McCrea and I wanted to use the cover to *Dark Knight Returns* #2, where Batman looks so tense he's ready to snap in half. But this was nixed, because—we found out later—Frank Miller was about to sign the contract for *Dark Knight III*, and they didn't want to piss him off.

A few years ago, a comics fan living in Qatar ran afoul of the country's censors when she tried to import copies of* The Boys. *How does it feel to draw the ire of a sovereign nation's censorship board?

Hardly surprising under the circs, but I do hope nothing awful happened to the lady in question. [The worst thing that happened was that she didn't get her books. Despite her understandable annoyance with a censorious regime, she managed to find humor in the story. More: http://tinyurl.com/jgac47n. ED]

You've been a long-time supporter of CBLDF. Why is protecting free speech important to you?

I've always assumed that one day I'd drop myself in the shit, so helping the CBLDF stick around has always just seemed like sensible self-preservation.



Line art for the cover of this issue. Artwork by Steve Dillon.
(Preacher ® and ™ Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon. Published by DC Comics.)

Remembering Steve Dillon

The success and even some of the controversy over *Preacher* is due in no small part to Ennis's frequent collaborator – both on comics and as a supporter of CBLDF's work – artist Steve Dillon. On October 22, 2016, we lost Dillon before his time. Dillon is best known to U.S. audiences as the co-creator of *Preacher*, but his body of work and influence on comics was immense. An artistic prodigy, Dillon got his first professional work at the age of 16 for Marvel UK. He would go on to work on *Doctor Who Magazine* and *2000 AD*'s iconic Judge Dredd.

Dillon collaborated with Ennis for two decades, first on *Hellblazer*, then on *Preacher*, which ran 66 issues between 1995 and 2000. He would also partner with Ennis on *Punisher* and *Hitman* and several other projects. Dillon was a master of expression and visual humor, imbuing each of his characters with distinct individuality. He demonstrated a knack for characterization the few can – or arguably ever will – match.

Aside from a prodigious talent, Dillon was a warm and modest man who made an impression on anyone who had the chance to spend time with him. "Steve loved people," remembered Ennis in his tribute to Dillon. "He found them endlessly interesting, he was happy to talk to anyone."

When we asked Dillon and Ennis about a cover for this issue of *CBLDF Defender*, we never would have dreamed that it would be Dillon's last *Preacher* cover. As ever, Dillon was glad to lend his support the Fund. Dillon was taken away much too soon, and we can only give him the same warm parting he gave us in his last email: Cheers!

CBLDF'S FIRST CASE, 30 YEARS LATER

On November 18, 1986, the purchase of just 15 comic books would spark a chain of events that would ignite an ongoing fight for free expression across the entire industry. A month later, Michael Correa, the manager of Friendly Frank's would be arrested for the display of obscene material. His life was shattered.

by Casey Gilly

Shop owner Frank Mangiaracina reached out to other retailers and publishers for help, among them Denis Kitchen. We spoke with Kitchen about the impact of the case.

How did you get involved? And what was it about this case that led to taking larger action?

I was the publisher of several of the titles, including *Omaha the Cat Dancer* by Reed Waller and Kate Worley. That long-running series, which began in *Bizarre Sex*, was effectively an erotic soap opera comic. There were long passages and entire issues without any sexual content, and when there was sexual content it was in a literary and plot context. *Omaha* had been widely praised by critics and fans, such as Neil Gaiman, and it had probably the highest female comics readership at the time. It was by no means obscene. So, to be told that an important series like *Omaha* was illegal even to display in a neighboring state just boiled my inner furnace.

How did he decide to take legal action to defend himself? And how did he respond?

Michael didn't personally take action. Frank hired a local attorney to defend Michael. The attorney assured them that it was an "open and shut case" that they would win easily. But in January 1988 Circuit Court Judge Paul Foxgrover found Michael guilty on thirteen charges brought against him. Michael was fined $750 and placed under one year court supervision.

This wasn't the first time someone in comics had been prosecuted — but it was the first time the community organized to create a support network. What was it about Michael's situation that inspired that?

Frank felt he and his attorney had the situation under control. But after Michael's conviction, everything changed... It was a dangerous precedent for a retailer to be charged and convicted for simply displaying comic books and magazines that a fanatical cop found personally offensive. I felt something had to be done, starting with appealing the case.

Since Frank had already paid out of pocket for legal help that may not have been competent, I felt it wasn't fair for him to pay for a much more costly appeal. So I organized a portfolio to raise funds for what I called the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, not knowing at the time that it would become a permanent organization or a 501 (c) 3 non-profit. I quickly went through my Rolodex and contacted artists like Frank Miller, Robert Crumb, Reed Waller, and Richard Corben, whose titles had been part of the Friendly Frank's bust. But I also reached out to artists who would likely never be busted, such as Will Eisner, Sergio Aragones, and others, including myself. Thirteen artists in all donated art for the plates... Kitchen Sink's printer agreed to print the portfolio at cost, most distributors waived a mark-up, and fans reacted with enthusiasm: the 1,500 portfolios instantly sold out.

I reached out to Burton Joseph, a prominent First Amendment attorney in Chicago, who agreed to take on the appeal. His services weren't cheap, but the Fund could pay him, and in November 1989 the Appellate Court in Chicago overruled Correa's conviction.

I originally saw the fundraising effort as a one time mission to overturn the Friendly Frank's case. But funds remained from the portfolio sales and other contributions, and industry support had been so positive at all levels—fans, retailers, publishers, creators—that I decided the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund should continue... I'm extremely gratified to see that the organization, nearly three decades later, is stronger and more capable than ever.

Read the full-length version of this interview at http://tinyurl.com/zj7rccs

Reed Waller's contribution to *A Benefit Portfolio in Defense of the First Amendment*, featuring Omaha the Cat Dancer. (CBLDF, 1987.)

From CBLDF Liberty Annual 2016.
Artwork by Nate Powell.

INSPIRING JUSTICE: CBLDF IN 2016

Since overturning the unjust conviction that sparked our formation, CBLDF has been an ardent champion for the rights of *everyone* who engages with comics.

Our work is more important than ever!

Legal Action

In 2016, CBLDF protected artists, retailers, educators, and individuals facing First Amendment emergencies. Here are just a few of our accomplishments:

- ✓ We aided comics creators facing legal crises before their matters went to court. From combating misguided cease and desist notices to more delicate legal matters, CBLDF's expert legal team came to comics creators' aid in meaningful ways and without any expense to the artists who needed our help.
- ✓ We struck down H.B. 153, an unconstitutional Louisiana law that posed a threat to retailers and artists. The law would have required websites to age-verify every Internet user before providing access to non-obscene material that could be deemed harmful to any minor. Violations of the law carried penalties of up to $10,000 in fines.
- ✓ We advised retailers on laws that affect their right to sell comics, including California A.B. 1570, a law that imposes new burdens on the sale of autographed goods.
- ✓ We advocated on behalf of activist mangaka Rokudenashiko, who visited the United States on a speaking tour. The artist was convicted of obscenity in Japan, making her entry to the United States potentially problematic. We argued that her prosecution, which targeted Rokudenashiko's work addressing contemporary issues of feminism and gender identity in Japan, underscore why our First Amendment is such a necessary and valuable legal protection.

Educator and Librarian Support

Teachers and librarians continue to be on censorship's front lines, and CBLDF has their backs. CBLDF aided many cases in this area during 2016:

- ✓ We defended comics, including four separate challenges to the highly acclaimed graphic novel *This One Summer* by Jillian and Mariko Tamaki.
- ✓ We co-signed more than a dozen letters of support to battle book challenges around the country.
- ✓ We provided advice and counsel that led to successful resolution of numerous comics challenges.
- ✓ We provided hundreds of pages of online resources to support comics in education, including resources designed to aid in the collection of challenged and banned graphic novels.

Publications

CBLDF's publishing program reaches tens of thousands of people every year, advancing knowledge and awareness about the free expression rights upon which our community depends. In 2016, our work reached new heights:

- ✓ We published *She Changed Comics*, an important new history of the women who changed free expression in comics.
- ✓ *CBLDF Defender* brings readers the most important news, analysis and historical perspective on the intersection of free expression and comics. Free in comic book stores, at conventions, and online, our quarterly news magazine is one of the most widely read publications dedicated to free speech. View it online at http://cbldf.org/cbldf-defender/
- ✓ CBLDF's *Defend Comics* brings the celebration of free speech to younger readers during Free Comic Book Day. This year's edition included contributions from powerhouse creators Craig Thompson, John Green, Lucy Knisley, James Kochalka, Sara Richard, Andy Runton, and Vivek Tiwary.
- ✓ We published two handbooks to assist librarians and their patrons. The 2016 edition of the *CBLDF Banned Books Week Handbook* spotlighted how diverse comics are disproportionately targeted in bans and challenges and offered strategies to help communities fight back. Our *Manga Book Club Handbook* gives librarians all the tools they need to establish ongoing activities using this powerful category, while also offering patrons and fans tips for coming together to celebrate manga in their community.
- ✓ *CBLDF Liberty Annual* returned, bringing the true stories of real heroes whose work helped make the world a better place. *CBLDF Presents: Liberty*, a collection of the anthology's early years, was also published in softcover in 2016.

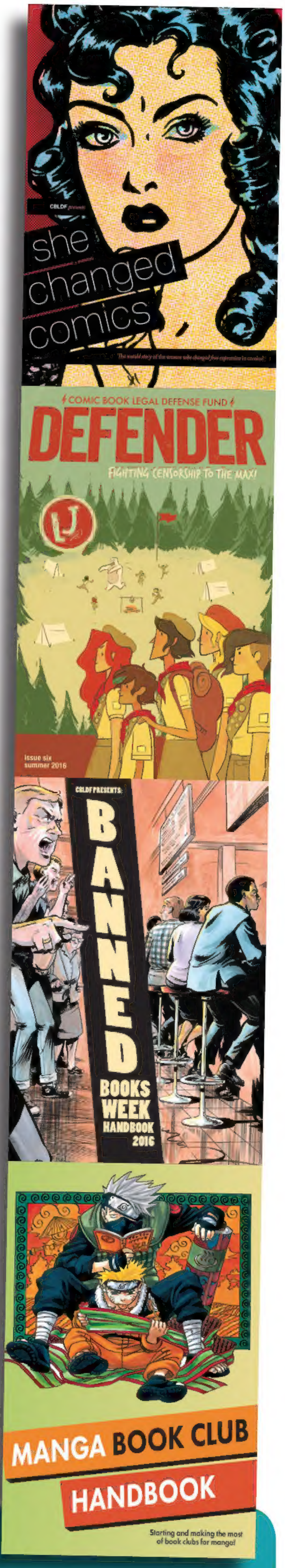
Coalitions

CBLDF is an important leader in the free expression community. In 2016 our coalition efforts helped protect the First Amendment on several fronts, and continued alliances that strengthen our efforts on behalf of comics.

- ✓ Chaired by our Executive Director, Charles Brownstein, the Banned Books Week Coalition celebrated diversity during this year's event. CBLDF participated in the Coalition's Night of Silenced Voices, bringing the celebration of Banned Books Week to readers in New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Portland, Denver, and Miami.
- ✓ CBLDF continued our sponsorship of the Kids' Right to Read Project, a leading advocate for the rights of young readers.
- ✓ Our membership in Media Coalition led to participation in several important cases, including our win against Louisiana's unconstitutional Internet law H.B. 153. We also maintained membership in the National Coalition Against Censorship and the Freedom To Read Foundation, providing a voice for comics in some of the most important discussions affecting free expression in the United States.

Appearances

CBLDF delivered more than three dozen public appearances at universities, libraries, symposiums, and conventions across the United States and around the world. We exhibited at every major comics convention in the United States. We also spoke out for the rights of our members on various television and radio outlets and developed important partnerships in our new home of Portland, Oregon.



CBLDF accomplishes all this and much more thanks to your contributions. We need your continued support to fund our important mission in 2017!

Please make a tax-deductible contribution to CBLDF today!

http://cbldf.org/contribute/donate/

As comics have gained popularity and respect, they have found a place in classroom libraries and curricula for all ages. CBLDF works to create resources that promote the understanding of comics and their value as educational tools.

Here are a few of the features we have for educators...

Using Graphic Novels in Education

Using Graphic Novels in Education is an ongoing feature from CBLDF that is designed to allay confusion around the content of graphic novels and to help parents and teachers raise readers. In this column, we examine graphic novels, including those that have been targeted by censors, and provide teaching and discussion suggestions for the use of such books in classrooms.

View the column online at http://cbldf.org/using-graphic-novels/

Adding Graphic Novels to Your Library or Classroom Collection

This ongoing feature from CBLDF provides specific resources for librarians and educators who may need to justify and defend the inclusion of the book in library and classroom collections. Each column provides specific information about a book, including a summary of challenges it has faced, reviews, praise, awards and other recognitions, and additional CBLDF resources that educators and librarians can provide to their administrators when they want to add the book to their collections.

View the column online at http://cbldf.org/adding-graphic-novels/

Discussion Guides

Given their visual nature, comics are easy targets for would-be censors. CBLDF Discussion Guides are tools that can be used to lead conversations about challenged graphic novels and to help allay misconceptions about comics. CBLDF Discussion Guides can be used by librarians, educators, retailers, or anyone who wants to lead a conversation about a graphic novel. In each guide, you will find the following:

- ✓ Synopsis: A brief summary of the major plot points in the graphic novel
- ✓ Themes: The overarching ideas that the creator(s) express in the graphic novel
- ✓ Reasons Challenged: The reasons why people have tried to censor the book
- ✓ Suggested Age Range: The age group for which the book is most likely suitable
- ✓ Discussion Questions: Tiered questions organized by cognitive complexity, from basic recall to higher-order thinking
- ✓ Activities: Projects and activities to take the conversation about graphic novels beyond the library or classroom and to encourage greater engagement with comics

View them online at http://cbldf.org/cbldf-discussion-guides/

Is there a comic you'd like us to cover? Send an email to info@cbldf.org to let us know!

As 2016 draws to a close, attacks on cartoonists and individuals sharing cartoons in countries around the world are on the rise.

INTERNATIONAL INCIDENTS

Musa Kart Jailed in Turkey

In early November, Turkish cartoonist Musa Kart and eight of his colleagues at Turkey's *Cumhuriyet* newspaper were formally arrested and charged with supporting Kurdish militants and the Gulenist movement. They are expected to remain in jail until their trial at an undetermined date.

More than a dozen *Cumhuriyet* staff members were detained amid allegations that the paper provided support for organizers of the failed coup attempt in July. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has used the coup as cover for a crackdown on media, academics, judges, and other public officials whose political views do not align with his own.

Following news of the charges, hundreds of supporters attempted to march to the newspaper's offices in Istanbul but were dispersed by police with tear gas and water cannons. Previous media arrests and closures had mainly focused on Kurdish outlets, but the secular *Cumhuriyet* is one of the largest and oldest mainstream papers in Turkey. The paper's remaining staff have resolutely continued to print new editions, and have run a blank panel with Kart's name where his weekly cartoon should have been.

An anonymous column at the English-language news site *Hurriyet Daily News* warned of dire things to come for Turkey: "Intellectuals live and produce for society, like the canary in the mine. When their voices are not heard, it means disaster is approaching…"

Musa Kart addresses government censorship in his work.
(© Musa Kart. From the artist's Facebook page. Published December 9, 2015.)

Ahmed Naji Files New Appeal

Egyptian author Ahmed Naji, jailed since February for "violating public modesty" with an excerpt from his novel *Use of Life*, is launching a new appeal for release after the government agreed to review the cases of political prisoners. Two previous appeals have already failed, most recently in August, and Naji is reportedly in ill health.

Use of Life is an experimental work that incorporates visual elements, including comics drawn by Ayman al-Zorkany. A 65-year-old reader claimed that an excerpt printed in 2014 in the state-owned *Akhbar al-Adab* newspaper caused him to have heart palpitations, a drop in blood pressure, and severe illness because of its references to sexual acts and drug use. In addition to Naji's prison sentence, the newspaper's editor Tarek el-Taher also received a fine equivalent to about $1,300.

The latest appeal comes after public pressure forced President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to form "a committee to review the cases of youth detained for non-violent 'politically related crimes.'" Activists have been drawing up lists of prisoners whose cases should be examined by the committee.

Russian Library Director Goes to Trial for Possessing "Extremist" Books

Last October, the personal residence and place of work for Natalia Sharina, director of the Library of Ukrainian Literature in Moscow, were raided by Russian authorities, who claim to have found books by Ukrainian nationalist Dmitry Korchinsky. The books that under Russian law are designated as "extremist" materials and banned.

For the last year, Sharina has been on house arrest awaiting trial, which began on November 2. She is charged with "inciting ethnic hatred and humiliating human dignity," as well as embezzling about $54,000 from the library charges that could land her up to a decade in prison.

Sharina maintains her innocence and that the books were planted. Sharina's lawyer told BBC that the whole case is "steeped in politics." During the trial, he expressed concern that such extreme measures were being taken to make a political statement: "It's very sad that someone is trying to

drag this court into politics," Pavlov told the judge, adding, "It's no coincidence that it's the Ukrainian literature library that was searched, and not a Belarusian or a Cossack one."

Jordanian Writer Assassinated Before Blasphemy Trial

Jordanian writer Nahed Hattar, who was facing a blasphemy charge for sharing a cartoon depicting God and an ISIS militant on Facebook, was assassinated outside an Amman courthouse in October, before the start of his trial. The alleged shooter, Riad Abdullah, was quickly taken into custody and identified as a former imam and known extremist.

Hattar's friends and family placed much of the blame for the assassination on the Jordanian government, which they say had done nothing to provide him with added security despite numerous online death threats. Hattar held some unpopular opinions to say the least: he was raised Christian but identified as atheist, staunchly supported the brutal regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, and advocated revoking the civil rights of Jordanians of Palestinian origin.

The cartoon by an unidentified artist that led to Hattar's blasphemy charge depicts an ISIS fighter in bed with two women and ordering God around like a servant. While the panel actually skewered the militant group's well-known hypocrisy regarding observation of Islamic practices, many Jordanians took it as a blasphemous insult to both God and Islam. Hattar deleted it from his Facebook page and apologized soon after the initial posting.

In an attempt to dispel reports that authorities had not done enough to protect Hattar from death threats, the state news agency quickly issued a condemnation, saying that "the government will respond with an iron fist against anyone who tries to use this crime to spread hate rhetoric in our society."

A court had already issued a gag order barring Jordanian media from covering Hattar's arrest and trial. In the wake of his shooting, an additional gag order on coverage of the assassination was issued, allegedly "to preserve the secrecy of the investigation in the public's interest."

Good evening, Abu Saleh, do you need anything?
Paradise
Yes Lord, get me a glass of wine and tell Gabriel to bring me some cashews. After that, send me an immortal servant to clean the floor and take the empty plates with you.
Don't forget to put a door on the tent so that you knock before you enter next time, your glory.
M80

The cartoon that Hattar shared on Facebook.
(Creator unidentified; translated version courtesy of @SelmaShawn on Twitter.)

Singapore Bookstore Chain Pulls Webcomic After Parent Complaint

In response to a single complaint on Facebook, a Singapore-based bookstore chain has reportedly removed collected editions of the Malaysian webcomic *Bro, Don't Like That La, Bro* by Ernest Ng. Even though the books bear a self-imposed warning label for "cheeky content" and were shelved in the adult sections of Popular Bookstores, the Facebook post warned parents to "beware of such comics" and added that "they should be taken off the shelves!"

Ng's webcomic stars five college-aged male housemates who spend their time playing computer games, fighting for the bathroom, and trying to impress women. An education blogger who goes by Mylilbookworm targeted the second volume, *My Bad Bromance*. She shared the cover and three interior pages with her 1,200 Facebook followers, outraged at the use of the Malaysian slang word "gugubird" for male genitals, the antics of a housemate who has a talent for going from "zero to naked in 2.9 seconds," and a brief mooning that Ng himself censored on the page.

The pictures spread across Facebook pages frequented by Singapore parents, and Popular issued a statement saying that it took "immediate action to ensure that the book has been removed from our shelves," even though the chain also pointed out the warning label and the fact that the comic was appropriately shelved in the adult section. Ng seemed thrilled to join the august club of banned authors, responding "Sweet!" to a fan's post about the removal.

Serbian Cartoonist Suspects Government in Contract Cancellation

A longtime editorial cartoonist for the Serbian daily newspaper *Politika* is airing his suspicion that the recent cancellation of his contract came about under pressure from Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic or other government officials. Dusan Petricic had been contributing cartoons to *Politika* for seven years and is also well-known as an illustrator of children's books. His cartoons have also appeared in the international press, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Toronto Star*. His recent work has focused on Vucic, a former propaganda minister under Slobodan Milosevic who some Serbs view as "an authoritarian who surrounds himself with yes-men."

After Petricic raised the possibility of the Prime Minister's involvement, Vucic issued a public denial, claiming to view the critical cartoons as "evidence of the strength of [Serbian] democracy." *Politika* editor Zarko Rakic subsequently offered to renew Petricic's contract even though he claimed the cartoonist was "sometimes late with his submissions" and also charged too much.

The timing of the offer did nothing to allay Petricic's suspicions, and he announced that he had instead accepted a new contract with the weekly news magazine *NIN*, where his cartoons will be accorded a full page in each issue.

Read longer versions of these stories and more at www.cbldf.org!

NOW AVAILABLE

CBLDF Presents: She Changed Comics

Art & story: various

She Changed Comics is the definitive history of the women who changed free expression in comics, with profiles of more than 60 groundbreaking female professionals and interviews with the women who are changing today's medium! A must for readers of all ages, students, and educators. ($15 donation, http://tinyurl.com/hxunq9z)

CBLDF Presents: Liberty Annual 2016

Art & story: various
Cover A: Nate Powell • Cover B: Brandon Graham

Be the change! CBLDF salutes the real people who changed the world, from suffragettes to sports legends, creative visionaries to courageous citizens who took a stand. *CBLDF Liberty Annual 2016* inspires readers to build a better world by telling the stories of the people who did just that! All proceeds from this anthology support CBLDF's important work protecting the freedom to read. ($5 donation, http://tinyurl.com/h6btma8)

JOIN CBLDF NOW FOR 2016 PREMIUMS!

Joining CBLDF puts you on the front lines of the fight against censorship! We'll thank you with the best incentives and benefits in the free speech community!

But time is almost up...

Becoming a member in CBLDF is one of the strongest ways you can protect free speech! CBLDF needs you and every person who believes the First Amendment is worth protecting. Sign up by December 31 to receive our 2016 premiums, featuring artwork by Craig Thompson (*Blankets*, *Habibi*, *Space Dumplins*)! Membership also makes a great gift!

JOIN TODAY!

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2–5, 2017: Emerald City Comicon

- Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, Washington
- www.emeraldcitycomicon.com/

March 31–April 2, 2017: WonderCon Anaheim

- Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, California
- www.comic-con.org/wca

April 21–23, 2017: C2E2

- South Building at McCormick Place, Chicago, Illinois
- www.c2e2.com/

Schedule subject to change. Visit cbldf.org for updates.

PREMIUMS SPOTLIGHT

Based on the best-selling series by Brian K. Vaughan and Cliff Chiang, the ***Paper Girls*** **enamel pin set** features the mascots of the American Newspaper Delivery Guild! Available as an exclusive fundraiser for CBLDF, these pins come as a set or with *Paper Girls* Volume 1, signed by artist Cliff Chiang! ($20 / $35 donation, http://tinyurl.com/zynfaf9)

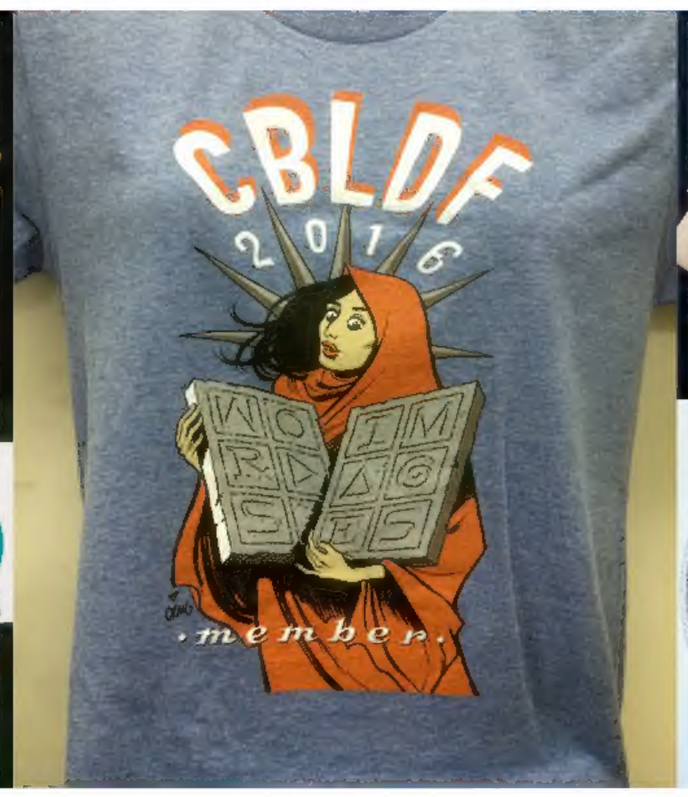
JOIN THE FIGHT!

We have membership plans for donors in every budget, and all of them are tax-deductible:

- ✓ **Member ($100):** CBLDF membership card, CBLDF button set, CBLDF sticker set, CBLDF pocket sketchbook, CBLDF member patch, and ***exclusive*** member-only t-shirt featuring Craig Thompson's gorgeous art!
- ✓ **Associate Member ($30):** CBLDF membership card
- ✓ **Supporter Member ($50):** CBLDF membership card, CBLDF button set, CBLDF sticker set, CBLDF pocket sketchbook, CBLDF member patch!
- ✓ **Defender Member ($250):** All of the above, plus the CBLDF water bottle and *CBLDF Presents: Liberty* Volume 1!
- ✓ **Protector Member ($500):** All of the above, plus an exclusive embossed executive Moleskine journal!
- ✓ **Champion Member ($1,000):** All of the above, plus recognition in *CBLDF Liberty Annual* 2017 and the CBLDF executive messenger bag!
- ✓ **Guardian Member ($2,500):** All of the above, plus special recognition in select CBLDF publications throughout 2017!

Use the signup form on the back cover of this magazine or visit http://cbldf.myshopify.com/collections/memberships to join today!

Art by Craig Thompson



RADIO FREE COMIX!

CBLDF is now part of the audio-sphere! A mix of interviews, discussions about censorship, convention panel recordings, and archival materials, the CBLDF Podcast is a monthly event, from our keyboards to your ears. Lay your ears on interviews with some of the biggest names in comics! The CBLDF Podcast is made possible in part by a donation from the Gaiman Foundation and member support.

Listen at http://cbldf.org/podcast

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1-800-99-CBLDF

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